The Man Who Never Lied

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/28264557.

Rating:
Teen And Up Audiences

Archive Warnings:
Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings, No Archive Warnings Apply

Category:
M/M

Fandom:
Grey's Anatomy

Relationships:
Derek Shepherd/Mark Sloan, Derek Shepherd & Mark Sloan

Characters:
Derek Shepherd, Mark Sloan (Grey's Anatomy)

Additional Tags:
Slash, Hurt/Comfort, Fluff, Angst

Language:
English

Series:
Part 131 of Gay's Anatomy

Stats:
Published: 2020-12-23 Words: 2,946 Chapters: 1/1

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Summary

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- Inspired by Sleep I'll Be Here When You Wake Up by McWordy

The Man Who Never Lied

You've always wondered silently to yourself, what does he have that I don't?

You're six days away from winning that sixty-day bet with Addison.

She's treated you like you're some hopeless dog who could never ever give up a bone, and you just about hate that she's almost right about you.

Almost.

You see, she's not quite correct about you just yet, because you haven't lost yet, and you're not even lying about that one.

There have been a few propositions, mostly from the new nurses who haven't talked to the more experienced ones yet; the ones for whom your reputation hasn't already been tainted with yet.

It's funny how you take their commentary to heart.

"Identical," Olivia Harper had said, and here you are realizing in analyzing her insult that it should be an insult to your own unwillingness to put yourself out there at your fullest ability.

If you had gotten a report card about your score at seducing women these days, you'd be hovering somewhere around a D-, hell, maybe even an F.

It's been fifty-four days since you've gotten any, and you started to feel the effects of those weeks ago.

Your libido is used to being tendered to, your body is used to being exercised, and your one-liners are used to being delivered.

You're not used to walking away from hot women when they pass you by in the hallway, and you're not used to being teased by this redhead who has stubbornly wormed your way into your heart like a damn temptress.

Well, now you're just kidding yourself.

You've been in love with her from day one- from the day she picked Derek, from the day she dated Derek, from the day she met you both but she passed by you on the way to the darker-haired skinny boy who'd taken you in like a stray when you were abandoned at grade school by two parents who hadn't discussed who'd do the daunting task of collecting you when the afternoon bell rang at three.

You were in love with her long before you'd seduced her that night, the night that you'd wanted to love her even though it was wrong.

Long before she'd asked you to kiss her under the porchlight, and you did, even though you knew she'd regret it afterward.

(That she'd regret you).

You can tell she's regretting setting up this sixty-day deal now, because you can see the deadline looming over her, and she isn't looking forward to crossing the finish line together.

You can tell that she's eyeing you, just waiting for you to cave first so that she can.

She's not in love with Karev, obviously; she's just a woman with needs, and some needs just need to be fulfilled, and apparently not just by you.

So you watch her try to help herself, try to hold herself, and you realize you don't want her to have to self-loathe anymore.

You'd planned on breaking it off with a nurse of course, because that would be classic, but as it turns out, they all had a mixer that morning so when you ask one of the new ones to get a drink with you that evening, she snickers, and turns you down bluntly.

Women: 50, Mark: 0.

So you're not here to settle any scores with them, this is not about any of them, it's about you and Addison.

And so you decide you'll go straight to the source, and you'll ask your ex-best-friend what this might be all about.

"Derek-" you call out to him all of these years.

He turns his head around reflexively before he has to hide his eagerness to be talking with you.

It's funny, you used to spend hours just hanging out with one another, mostly at his house just watching old movies and talking about nothing at all in particular.

These days you sit on your empty couch, and sometimes you miss the quiet, easy companionship that your childhood friendship came with.

You were comfortable with each other, and that was what mattered to you at that point.

"Mark-" Derek questions, as he leans towards you even as you can tell he's conflicted about whether or not he or you should be walking away.

"Do you want to get a drink with me? Tonight?" You ask forwardly, and you can tell it's throwing him off just a little bit.

"Trying to distract yourself from all of the people around you trying to get into your pants before the end of this, are you?" Derek teases.

There's a little glint in his eye, taking pleasure from your suffering, and you smile and accept it, because this is who you are together, this bantering pack of two wolves who can't help but fight, but can't help but stick up for each other, either.

"You know it," you grin, and you're somehow not angry that he, of course, already knows about this piece of information/gossip.

It's all over the hospital anyway; you've seen other people taking bets on it.

Idly, you wonder if Addison has, and if so, which side did she bet on?

All of that is far from your mind though, as Derek is leading you out of the hospital to Joe's because you both know you could walk right on back to the hospital if you had to.

You wonder if it's only his own surgical arrogance that keeps you here, or if he's taking your own medical skills into account as well.

"Rum and Coke?" Derek asks you with a cheeky grin.

Derek knows you, you realize, and you know this when he doesn't have to wait for your answer to order you one.

He puts it in front of you after he's handed you double-scotch-single-malt to match his, just the way you both have liked it since you'd both ordered one together when you were seventeen and you'd gotten a hold of Nancy Shepherd's ex-boyfriend's fake ID.

You take your shot, and he takes his, and you start to drink your drinks slowly because you know you might get called back to work anyway, and you definitely cannot get hammered.

Not on a Tuesday, you're too old for this now.

"So, how are you holding up, is it hard for you?" Derek glimmers, and you hate just a little bit that he has this one over you, too, when it's *his* damn ex-wife that's in question here.

"You know it," you tease back, because for some reason you always feel the need to show off your sexual prowess for Derek.

You're not sure where this tendency has emerged from, but you know that it's always been there, at some level.

There's something about the tension in the air, where Derek says he believes you, and causes you to lean closer to lean on his shoulder.

He leans his head down as well, putting his drink on the bar counter, and he strokes over your hair with his hands.

"You're being such a good boy about it," Derek taunts, and for some reason, you figure yourself it's the alcohol- even though you know objectively that you're way too sober for that to be true in the slightest, that it causes your skin to heat up and tingle.

"You know it," you whisper, and it comes out lower and more gravelly than you'd expected it to.

You huff at yourself internally; you're so deprived of human contact at this point you're two steps away from hitting on your ex-lover's ex-husband (wow, isn't that a mouthful!).

What's even more surprising, though, is that Derek doesn't seem to be fazed by it.

He laughs, he leans into you, too, and pretty soon he's wrapping his arms around you.

It should feel strange, but it doesn't.

All these years later, Derek's arms around you just feels safe, natural, and easygoing.

"Would you like to get out of here?" Derek asks you quietly.

Those exact words, whispered into your ear, or, more accurately, being whispered into a woman's ear by you are the most classic of segues to a night spent in bed with someone.

These lines spoken to you by your best friend shouldn't sound like a proposition, because it isn't, and yet, somehow they do.

"Yes," you breathe out before you can overthink it.

"Let's get you home," Derek says comfortingly as he pays both your tab, and his, before he leads you out of Joe's bar.

If anyone had been staring at you, you wouldn't know, because all you'd been focusing on was the clean way that Derek had been moving, the sureness of his steps, and the defined edges of his body as he held you close, much closer, and much longer, than he probably really needed to.

"Would you like to come over?" Derek asks you, to give you a choice.

This time, it doesn't sound quite like a proposition; this time it sounds closer to when you were both ten, and he wanted the company, or at least, that's what he always said after his mom told him to take you home because you looked tired and she knew that you had no family waiting for you.

Derek had taken you under his wing then, and he is still doing so now, as he leads you both to a cab and gives the driver his own address, and you nod as if to say you agree so that he knows not to feel as though he's kidnapping you.

"How are you feeling?" Derek asks you, his voice tender and rife with concern.

"I'm alright," you answer him tiredly.

Truthfully, you'd rather go back to when he was stroking your hair at the bar, because you like that, but you could never tell Derek that because he'd look at you strange.

"Do you want to watch a movie when we get back?" He asks you, and you feel fourteen again, and you decide to finally contribute something of substance here:

"Do you have 'Casablanca?,' I like that one," you suggest to him, because you know that he likes it.

"Yeah," Derek shrugs. "I thought you weren't into that one, though?" He questions.

"Changed my mind," you shrug, and you wonder why your heart is pounding out of your chest when he remembers your tastes in movies.

Derek pops popcorn in a very contrived manner, because he lives in a trailer and they don't have a microwave.

"God, how did you and Addison live here?" You blurt out, pointing to the half-kitchen-half-bathroom-have-bedroom setup.

"I have no idea. She hated it though," he giggles.

"Yeah, she would," you laugh, and for some reason, it doesn't bother him that you know this.

"Addison would try to put her shoes in the cupboard because we didn't have a whole closet for them," Derek offered.

"I bet she stored her clothes on the rack in the bathroom, too?" You offer back.

"You know it," Derek hands you the meager bowl of popcorn before sitting down next to you, and then slapping your hand away when you start taking large handfuls.

"Hey, that's mine too, you know!" Derek protests.

"You know, I think this might be a large part of our problem," you smirk.

"This is NOT 'finder's keepers'," Derek offers.

"Yeah, and if it had been, then none of this would have happened, right?" You slap his wrist back when he takes a whole popcorn fistful.

"If this had been like that, then you would never have nearly microwaved my frogs," says Derek, clearly sidestepping the bigger issue here.

"I never pressed START, and you know that!" You take his easy way out, too.

"Then I never would have stolen your blue necktie," Derek offers.

"So that's where that went!" You gloat. "I always thought that I'd lost that!" You smile.

"What about you, do you have any confessions of your own, Mark?" Derek challenges.

"Then I would never have rediscovered your Lego collection," you offer. "I even took home the purple ones," you say.

"Those were limited edition!" Derek whines.

"Yeah, and you never appreciated them," you bite back.

And then, your eyes lock for a moment, and you realize you're no longer fighting over just Legos anymore.

"I didn't mean to. Neglect them, I mean. I just got busy with other things…" Derek sighs.

"So is it really that bad that I took them out for a spin?" You offer hopefully.

"I have no idea," says Derek.

"Do you want your purple Legos back, Derek?" You say very softly.

"I have no idea," says Derek after considering this for a moment.

"See that's always your problem. You have all of these options and you have no idea what you actually want," you sigh.

"I thought I knew," Derek sighs also.

"Yeah, well. It wasn't as though I was awesome at Legos either," you shrug.

"Do you even know where those are nowadays?" Derek laughs.

"I might have left them back at the Brownstone," you shrug.

"Along with your bike?" says Derek.

"And my futon couch," you say back.

"That was Addison's," he replies.

"She gave it to me," you reply back.

"She's an idiot," says Derek.

"Hey, watch it," you frown at him. "She's not here, and that's not fair," you offer.

"You're right," says Derek. "I bet she would have hated those Legos…" he sighs.

"Probably. She might have broken them to bits with her high heels," you smile.

"Nah, I bet she would have planted them just for me to step on when I did something terrible," says Derek.

"What did you do that was terrible, Derek?" you wonder aloud.

"Oh, so many things. It's really the things that I didn't do that were worse than the things that I did," Derek offers.

"I did everything that I should have done," you offer.

"Hey, it's all in the past now," Derek shrugs.

"And here I thought you would never, ever admit that," you smile sheepishly.

"Well, why not. We're sitting here, aren't we? With you with no Addison. With me with no Meredith. And we're back watching Casablanca on DVD because this damn thing doesn't have Blu-Ray," Derek laughs.

"You've seen it before anyway," you roll your eyes.

"So have you," Derek teases.

You throw popcorn at him, and he catches it in his lips just like he used to.

"Do you think you can do it now?" Derek challenges you, and you wordlessly open your mouth wide.

He aims right for you, but you dodge right at the last minute, so he has to try over and over again.

"You suck at this game, I bet if it was an inch away from you, that you couldn't catch it," says Derek.

"Oh yeah? Wanna bet?" You egg him on just like you used to.

"Definitely," says Derek, and you shake on it even though there's no prize money involved.

There doesn't have to be, between you.

There's no need because your bragging rights are everything, anyway.

"Three, two, one-" Derek says as he tries to trick shot you, but you've anticipated it, so you've leaned in closer so he can't possibly miss you.

Only just as he reaches away to throw it harder than he probably needed to, his lips part in concentration, and your lips are eagerly awaiting a kernel of popcorn, and the two of your mouths combine in the center.

Derek tastes just like single-malt scotch and popcorn, and your lips react instinctively to them, closing around them, and moving just slightly.

And Derek seems surprised, but not shocked, that this is finally happening.

He drops his small kernel of popcorn on the ground, and he wraps his hands in your hair just as he had earlier, his arms around your strong shoulders, his fingers laced tightly around you.

His lips part, too, as if he were the one waiting for something to land in them.

You dart your tongue out experimentally and defying all odds, you make Derek moan out reflexively.

"Mark…" your name comes out strangled, but he doesn't move away

from you, and neither do you, from him.

It's been too long without contact, for both of you, and it's been too long since you've been friends.

You miss him with every inch of your body, and you can tell that Derek wants you back in his life with the way he's dancing his lips, and tongue, and teeth, back.

"Derek…" you say quietly, as he finally pulls away from you.

His eyes are all glassy and nervous, and you find your steady hands shaking.

"What does this mean…?" He asks you, all open and tender as if he's been hurt already.

"Is there something you want it to mean…?" You offer, and you realize there are many answers here that would disappoint you.

"Do you want to dig out those old comic books from under all of Addison's dresses?" Derek shrugs, and you pick up on the fact that this is the closest he's ever going to get to asking you to stay over with him.

"Do you have the old Spiderman ones?" You counter, grinning when you see that he is.

He does, and you read them aloud to him, just like when you were both eleven years old, and he'd gotten them from a magazine order.

You'll dig out his Batman ones next, probably, and by the time you wake up in the morning, with your head tucked under Derek's shoulder, you'll have realized you maybe don't need anything more than that, after all.

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***** **FIN**

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading, folks!

bobbiejelly

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